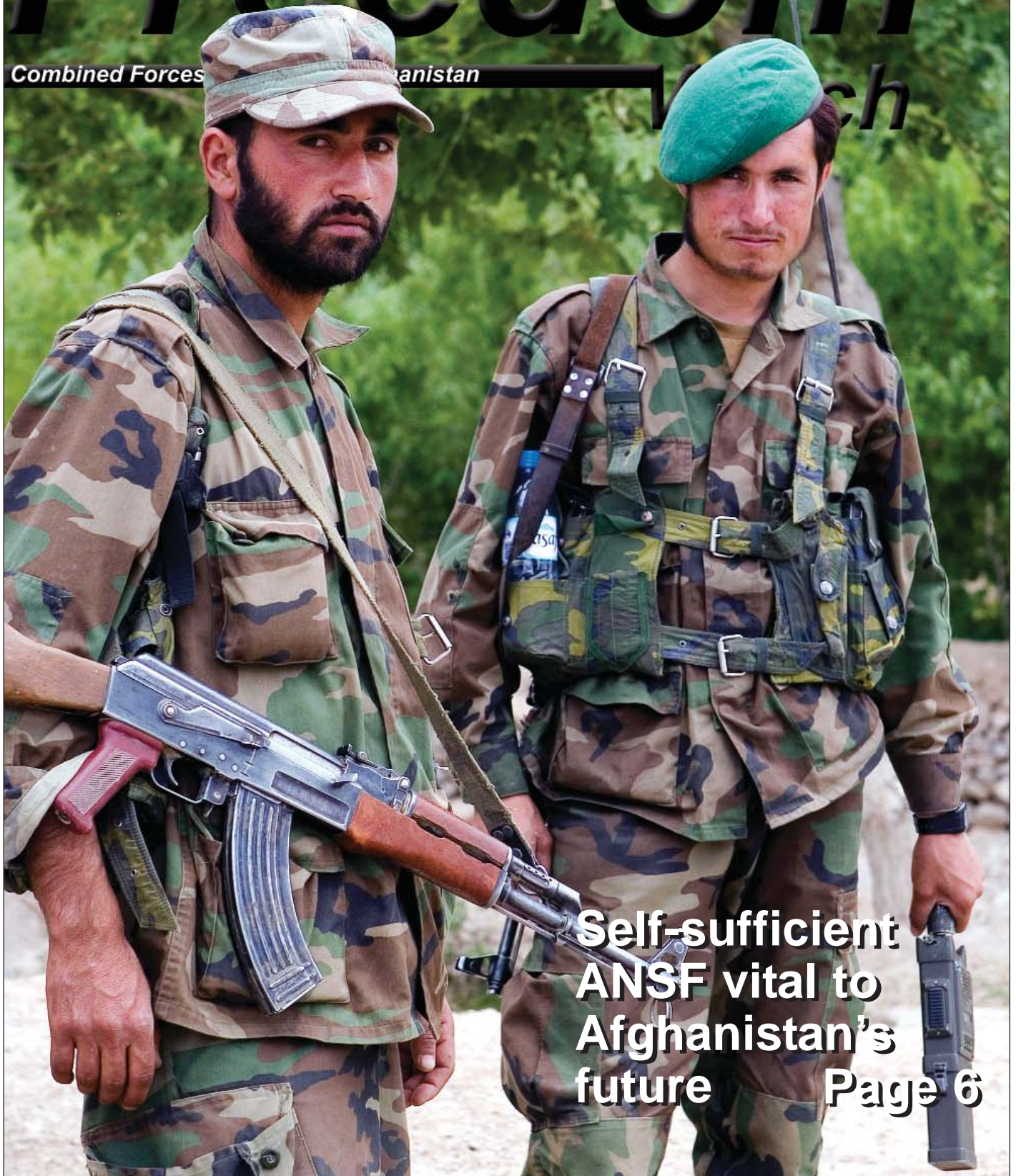


June 19, 2006

Afghanistan Freedom

Combined Forces Afghanistan



Self-sufficient
ANSF vital to
Afghanistan's
future

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CJTF-76 and 10th Mountain Division Commander Army Maj. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley puts on the shoulder sleeve insignia for former wartime service on the right shoulder of Army Col. Larry D. Wyche, commander of the Joint Logistics Command and 10th Sustainment Brigade, during a ceremony at Bagram Airfield on June 14.

Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Rautio
10th Joint Logistics Command public affairs



Cover: Two Afghan National Army soldiers stand watch so their fellow soldiers can distribute school supplies to the children at Zabul Province in southern Afghanistan during a recent civic assistance mission there.

Photo by Estonian Capt. Taavi Tuisk

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Afghanistan **Freedom** Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan **Watch**

Freedom Watch is a weekly publication of
Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan.

CFC-A Commander Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry
Public Affairs Officer Col. Thomas Collins

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Afghan officials coordinate vital medical care

By Navy Petty Officer
2nd Class

Jamie D. Hamil
Khowst Provincial
Reconstruction Team

**FORWARD OPERATING
BASE CHAPMAN, Afghan-
istan** -- In rural Afghanistan, sick or injured citizens have very few medical treatment options available.

For this reason, Khost Director of Public Health, Dr. Amir Bodshah Rehmatzai and the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team delivered immediate healthcare to more than 250 villagers in Shobkhil on May 30.

The village, at the base of the mountains of the Tani District, is nearly six miles from the closest medical clinic, and more than an hour's drive from a hospital — across rough and rocky terrain.

Khost Hospital Doctor Gulab and members of the

PRT arrived at the village just as the Shobkhil Elementary School was released from morning sessions. Gulab and the PRT physicians set-up examination rooms in most of the school's classrooms and quickly began attending to both male and female patients.

When asked if they were happy to receive medical care, one elderly woman said, "Yes. The medical care is good and I am happy that they are here."

Local authorities expressed concern over the lack of treatment facilities, poor quality of medical staff, and short supply of medications in the area. Recognizing the need for improved healthcare, Khowst Governor Marijadeen Patan has named public health one of his top priorities.

He's developed a plan to provide each district with at least one medical clinic to support local residents with basic



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jamie D. Hamil

Women and girls gather around Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team interpreter Sharifa Waziri as they wait to receive medical care in Shobkhil village, Tani District on May 30.

healthcare. The Tani District Medical Clinic is near completion, and is expected to open later this month.

Patan is working with the PRT and USAID to provide better equipment, a more proficiently trained staff, and expansions to the hospitals and clinics in each district. For example, the provincial hospi-

tal in Matun will include a burn unit. Once completed, the hospital will also serve as a teaching hospital for medical students coming from Kabul.

As the transformations take shape, advanced healthcare delivery and medical facility improvement will continue to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Khost Province.

Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week



Who is the elder?

Dari

Bebakhshaid
(Bay-bahk-shade?)

Pashtu

Wu bakhai
(Wuh bahk-hi)

Afghan cultural tidbit

Eid al-Adha is the most important feast of the Muslim calendar. It concludes with the Pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid al-Adha lasts three days and commemorates Abraham's willingness to obey God's request to sacrifice his son. Muslims believe the son offered to be sacrificed was Ishmael rather than Isaac as told in the Old Testament.

CFC-A command sergeant major delivers safety message

By Army Sgt. Victoria Willoughby
345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan -- More than 50 percent of Coalition deaths in Afghanistan are the result of non-battle injuries.

With that statistic in mind, Army Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel R. Wood, Command Sergeant Major of Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan, is working to develop a video about real world

safety issues from the unique perspective of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, serving in Afghanistan.

Wood visited here, the first of several stops in Regional Command East, to talk with Soldiers who deal first-hand with situations where proper safety precautions can mean the difference between life and death. He conducted "on-camera" interviews with the Soldiers to gather content for the video.

"FOB Salerno is the first stop for these

guys - they are going to be hitting quite a few FOBs to talk to Soldiers about various incidents involving safety that have taken place within the past few weeks," said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Victor C. Rivera of the 4th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment from Fort Drum, N.Y.

Wood spoke to Soldiers serving in D Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment based at Fort Drum, who were involved in a recent vehicle rollover. Fortunately no one was hurt. He recorded their responses about the procedures they followed and techniques they used when reacting to the incident.

Proper techniques and procedures discussed included wearing seatbelts, rollover maneuver drills and effective communication between the driver, passengers, and the rest of the convoy.

The video will also stress the significance of making appropriate, split-second decisions and maintaining control of the situation.

"This video will grab their attention and teach them the importance of the real deal - it will emphasize the importance of managing the risk, owning the edge, making the unit successful and surviving deployment," said Army Sgt. Maj. Tom S. Gills, Combined Security Transition Command senior enlisted leader.

The video targets Soldiers preparing to deploy as well as the Soldiers currently serving in Afghanistan.

"The video will first make it to the units who will be replacing us and also to units who will be rotating through at a later time," said Rivera.



Photo by Army Sgt. Victoria Willoughby

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel R. Wood, Command Sergeant Major of Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan and Army Sgt. 1st Class Cynthia Hernandez, a video broadcaster with the 345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, conduct a video interview with Soldiers to gather content for a safety video to be viewed by Soldiers being deployed.

Lieutenant General Eikenberry addresses ANA military academy cadets

By Air Force Master Sgt. Chris Miller

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan public affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan -- The commander of Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan spoke to the cadets of the National Military Academy of Afghanistan here June 12 about leadership, vision and character development.

Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry,

CFC-A commander, told the first two cadet classes of the academy what a great honor it was to be standing in front of the future leaders of Afghanistan. He said they live in a country torn apart by three decades of war and must dedicate themselves to change if they want a better future.

"Your country and Army face a time of great change and opportunity," said Eikenberry.

"You must decide what your destination is and what the best way is to move forward."

He said the real long-term change in the Army and in the country begins here at the academy. "You are the engine of change for the future," said the general.

The vision for the academy is to become a "crown jewel" of university-level educational and leader development insti-

tutions in Afghanistan. Its graduates, according to the academy's vision statement, will set the highest standards of professionalism throughout a lifetime of service to Afghanistan in military and civilian leadership positions.

The general challenged the cadets to make the vision happen and to make a positive future for their country. He

See CADETS Page 13

455th AEW leaders visit the Panjshir PRT

By Air Force Capt.

Joe Campbell

Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team public affairs

PANJSHIR PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Air Force Brig. Gen. Christopher Miller and other members of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing at Bagram Airfield visited the Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team on May 6 to learn about the mission of the men and women serving there.

The group visited the tomb of Ahmed Shah Massoud, a prominent Panjshir military leader who was assassinated Sept. 9, 2001. Some believe it was done by orders from Osama Bin Laden to ensure Taliban support in Afghanistan for his terrorist network following Sept. 11, 2001.

The group met with Governor Haji Bahlol before taking a driving tour of the valley and having lunch with Panjshir PRT troops at their safe house.

"I wanted to see how our Airmen fit into the joint team of doing business and see what the Panjshir PRT is doing to make a difference in Afghanistan," said Miller, 455th AEW commander.

After a briefing on the mission of the PRT, the group vis-

ited several of the on-going projects in the province, which included a micro-hydro power station and the flagship project for the Shutol District, a 9,000 square foot district center.

"I saw the great relationship between local Afghans and the PRT, while teaching villagers how to do things for themselves."

*Air Force Brig. Gen. Christopher Miller,
commanding officer
455th Air Expeditionary Wing*

"The Shutol Regional Center is one of the first projects a traveler will notice when coming into the valley," said 1st Lt.

Chris White, Panjshir PRT engineer. The contractor hired local villagers to do much of the construction, which not only showed the villagers the latest changes in construction techniques, but added a sense of pride and ownership.

"Instead of using the local practice of mixing concrete in a hole; we insisted that the concrete would be stronger and the overall quality much higher if a barrel mixer were used; the contractor immediately implemented that process," said White.

The final stop for the visitors

was the Shutol micro-hydro power plant located along the Panjshir River. It will provide power to area homes, and power the new district center's offices from a clean and renewable energy source.

"I saw the great relationship between local Afghans and the PRT, while teaching local villagers how to do these things for themselves," said Miller.

The Panjshir PRT has a great mission and is accomplishing a lot, said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Frederick Ricker, 455th AEW command chief.

The multi-service PRT includes various military specialties including a Navy engineer, Army Civil Affairs Soldiers and Air Force security, services and transportation specialists. The team's mission is to help extend the authority of the Afghan government through reconstruction, security and stability through projects and outreach programs.

Enduring Voices

How much of an impact do you think the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi will have on the war on terrorism?



**Army Spc.
Aaron Raimer**
Bagram Airfield

"One down, many more to go."



**Air Force Senior
Airman
Thomas Hough**
Bagram Airfield

"I think its a morale boost for our service members"



**Army Spc.
Charity Jones**
Bagram Airfield

"It's definitely going to send a message and let people know the consequences of being part of terrorist actions."



**Army Lt. Col.
Edward Boyer**
Bagram Airfield

"I think it has a significant impact. Any time you stop a leader, you've affected their entire operation."

A self-sufficient ANSF is the Coalition's goal

By Estonian Capt. Taavi Tuisk

**Combined Task Force Aegis public affairs
ZABUL PROVINCE, Afghanistan --**

"We're not here teaching them to fight. They know how to fight," says Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey McClure, an Oregon Army National Guardsman from Roseburg, Ore.

McClure is a member of the 96th Embedded Training Team which mentors the young Afghan National Army of Zabul Province in southern Afghanistan.

The ANA soldiers have learned how to fight during the decades of war that devastated this country of green river valleys, dust stormy deserts and rugged mountains. Now ANA has ex-Mujahideens, who fought against the Soviets in 1980s, and Soviet-trained officers, who fought on the other side, in same subunits, working for the common goal of making their country peaceful again. Teambuilding is what McClure considers to be his main job everyday.

McClure's commander, Army Col. Martin Leppert, from the Wisconsin Army National Guard but who lives in Manassas, Va., is the main mentor for Col. Rasak, commander of 2nd Brigade, 205th "Hero" Corps of the ANA.

Rasak known as, "The Fighting Mullah," by the ETT, has his unit spread throughout the province to fight the insurgents who are trying to undermine the democratically elected but still fragile government of Afghanistan.

"Whenever the Romans found a strategic point, they provided security for the site and built a garrison there themselves," said Leppert, pointing to a provincial map. "This is a harsh country up in there. And the road network is very poor. It's the same if you look at the Roman Empire. They built roads so they could move their armies and they could move goods and services around the empire. This is exactly what we need to do now in Afghanistan."

With Leppert's initiative, road-developing projects with the goal of making travel easier for both Afghan soldiers and local businesses and villagers, are underway.

"Coach, teach and mentor, but don't



Photo by Estonian Capt. Taavi Tuisk

Afghan National Army soldiers distribute school supplies donated by Americans to the children at Zabul Province in southern Afghanistan. The Embedded Training Team, located in the Zabul Province in southern Afghanistan trains, coaches and mentors local units of the ANA.

command," said Leppert as he describes the mission to his team. "We offer them direction. We point out the potential solutions in the hope they'll reach out and grasp it. We've given them the tools and we try to get the Afghan commanders, staff officers and soldiers to use them."

This is neither a fast nor an easy task to accomplish given the cultural and language differences and literacy hurdles to overcome.

Most of the ETT members are based in the provincial capital of Qalat, but some are spread out over the mountainous province. At 11 Forward Operating Bases, ETT mentors provide advice to the ANA subunit commanders.

"My guys are decisively engaged all over," said Leppert. "We're rockin' and rollin' out there with these guys all the time."

Army Staff Sgt Kevin Hunt, a North Carolina Army National Guardsman from Greenboro, N. C., is one of them. He is a company level mentor at ANA FOB at Arghandab River Valley, north from Qalat.

Hunt is impressed with the ANA progress. He sees how an armed force composed of soldiers with different backgrounds is moving towards a disciplined and organized force every day.

Still, the ANA faces challenges. Most soldiers only have one uniform - some do not have boots. Keeping connected with their families, usually living in other parts of the country is difficult and a viable postal system hasn't been developed yet. Therefore, going home to see their loved ones might be a weeklong journey.

"Rome wasn't built in a day," said Leppert. "Rome's Army wasn't either. Be patient."

In part, the ANA has already reached some of its milestones, explained Hunt.

"Their training at squad or platoon level is as good as the Coalition forces," said Hunt. "We would like to see a more independent ANA, and they grow more independent every day. Officers and NCOs are more proactive in combat support, per-

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Zabul Province children return to school

By Army Capt. Lawrence Sekajipo

Task Force Warrior

QALAT, Afghanistan -- More than 75 children in Khakeran and Anwari valleys, Deh Chopan district, celebrated the first day of school May 27 despite enemy insurgents' intimidation throughout Zabul Province.

Three volunteer teachers and 60 students, some from as far away as nine miles, attended the first day of school.

The project, led by Afghan and Coalition Forces, was led by the commitment and dedication of Khaki-Afghan Police Chief, Abdul Hassan, and Soldiers from Task Force Warrior, 2nd Platoon, Creek Company of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment from Fort Polk, La.

Hassan together with Army 1st Lt. Matthew Psilos, Army Staff Sgt. Yusuf Jackson and Afghan National Army commander, 1st Lt. Ataullah, began making improvements to the education system of the two valleys in March.

The team faced a challenge of finding volunteer teachers despite the fear of reprisals from enemy insurgents. In the past, the Taliban has threatened teachers in Anwari Valley by telling the locals that any

volunteer would be beaten or even killed.

Some locals said Taliban were spotted stopping children on their way home from school in the vicinity of Baylough Village. Two males were seen taking books from children — books with Koran writings that were later burned by the men. Such incidents have enraged many Zabul residents, including Zabul Governor Del Bar Arman.

"Why are they (Taliban) against education? We have lots of verses (in the Koran) on education and the insistence on education," said Arman. "How can they destroy schools in the name of Islam?" Arman said some of the men disrupting the education system are illiterate themselves. The rationale behind preventing children from obtaining an education or being able to read the Koran is something that escapes Arman.

Local villagers in the two valleys have shown interest in improving education in the region for the sake of their children. One local businessman involved is Bazaar Mayor Bang, who offered five of his shops for use as classrooms. He also provides supplies, snacks and water for the local children.



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Yusuf Jackson

Students pose with Army 1st Lt. Matthew A. Psilos, 2nd Battalion 4th Infantry Regiment (Task Force Warrior), from Fort Polk Louisiana. Book bags and school supplies were distributed by Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Creek Company.

Psilos and his platoon were able to gather schools supplies including notebooks, pens, pencils, bottle water, backpacks, blankets and water coolers.

Bang and Psilos are currently planning future expansions to the school. They hope to eventually have at least seven classrooms for the children.

ANA, Afghanistan National Police and Soldiers from Creek Company, 2nd Platoon, will provide security during and after school hours to ensure students and teachers are protected throughout the school day.

"The children are very enthu-

siastic about school and are enjoying the classes," said Psilos. "The teachers, headed by Mohammed Zahir (from Mangelkhan Village) are excellent and have set an example by their fortitude and willingness to educate the youth of the district despite the threats to themselves and their families."

"This project has been very rewarding for the Soldiers of 2nd Platoon — the results have been outstanding and tangible," added Psilos. "This gives my Soldiers a feeling of responsibility and pride in what they have been able to accomplish."

FORCES from Page 6

sonnel decisions and preparing for future operations."

Only the ANA unit commander has the final word on his units' readiness for combat.

"The ETTs advise the Afghan officers and enlisted. We do not conduct training solely by ourselves," said Hunt. "The only time a U.S. Soldier conducts the training just solely by himself is when they are introducing something new to the ANA."

Hunt is also very proud of the ANA's

vehicle preventive care. "Those Rangers have far exceeded anything the Ford Motor Company could ever dream of," said Hunt about the light brown pickup trucks that are the main means of transport for the ANA.

"The reason why these trucks keep rolling is because of the maintenance program that the ANA drivers have on their vehicles," said Hunt. "I have total faith in the ANA and their maintenance program."

He is also very proud his team is com-

posed of volunteers. The Afghans know they don't have to be here yet they volunteer to come here for a whole year to do assist their fellow Afghans rebuild their country, he added.

Leppert's team of mixed backgrounds and careers is composed of active-duty National Guardsmen, traditional Guardsmen, active and reserve Navy and some active-duty Soldiers.

The ETT at Zabul Province, Leppert said, is a diverse team with a single goal, to get the ANA to stand on their feet.



ANA Maj. Gen. Qadam Shah addresses his unit June 11. Shah, who is the commander of the 1st Brigade, 201st Corps, has had in the area.

ANA, U.S. p

By Army Spc. James Tamez
19th Public Affairs Detachment

TAGAB VILLAGE, Afghanistan -- The Afghan National Army and U.S. forces worked together to bring security and medical support to the people of Tagab Village.

ANA soldiers from the 1st Brigade, 201st Corps, seized a sizable weapons cache June 9. Then, June 10 to 12, U.S. medical personnel and local doctors provided medical treatment for members of Tagab village.

"The operations here are going well," said ANA Maj. Gen. Qadam Shah, commander, 1st Brigade, 201st Corps. ANA forces and U.S. forces are working well together and accomplishing many objectives. Those types of missions are essential for stability purposes, said Shah.

The weapons cache, which included rocket propelled guns, explosives and munitions, was seized outside of Tagab

Photos by Army Spc. James Tamez

ANA Maj. Gen. Qadam Shah and ANA Lt. Col. Fayz Mohammad Salengy, right, examine a list of information during an ANA raid outside of Tagab Village on June 9. Salengy is the commander of 1st Kandak, 1st Brigade, 201st Corps and Shah is the commander of 1st Brigade, 201st Corps.



...sses soldiers from the 1st Kandak, 1st Brigade, 201st Corps in Tagab Village on
...nder of 1st Brigade, 201st Corps, congratulates the soldiers on the success the



Rocket propelled grenades, explosives and automatic weapons were seized during an ANA raid outside of Tagab village on June 9. The raid was part of joint U.S. and ANA operations in the region.

provide security, health

village, said ANA Lt. Col. Payz Mohammad Salengy, commander, 1st Kandak, 1st Brigade, 201st Corps.

“The operation was accomplished with the help of [U.S. forces],” Salengy said. “They flew us into the area and we raided it with good results.”

Shah said these types of missions are successful because of the assistance of U.S. forces.

“It is a good opportunity for us,” Shah said. “[U.S.] forces are training us and helping us. We are all working hard to secure the peace.”

Shah added US and Afghan forces are participating in more than just combat operations.

“Coalition forces are helping us provide medical help, build schools and roads in the region,” said Tagab Province Governor Moskinyer. “We are thankful for the help of Coalition forces.”

The evidence of cooperation was vis-

ible as Coalition forces treated Afghans in the Tagab area.

“We are working with ANA physicians to provide mostly preventive medical work,” said Army Lt. Col. Gary Tooley, physicians assistant, 196th Field Artillery Brigade. “We are also providing dental and veterinary services.”

The Soldiers of the 196th, along with Afghan doctors, provided medical assistance for several hundred people during the medical assistance visit. The most memorable was the assistance given to several children suffering from burns, according to Tooley.

“The children were injured when a water heater exploded,” Tooley said. “They had severe burns on nearly 10 percent of their bodies. I’m glad we were able to help them.”

Shah said everything being done is to help the people of Afghanistan rebuild and have a prosperous future.



Automatic weapons were seized during an ANA raid outside of Tagab village.

Karzai Orphanage gets donation from ANA, Coalition forces

By Army Sgt. Mayra Kennedy

345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan -- Children at Shaheed A. Ahad Karzai Orphanage were surprised May 29 with a large donation made by the Afghan National Army and Coalition forces in a humanitarian effort to aid those in need.

The orphanage, named after Afghan President Karzai's father, is an elementary school during the day, but at night it becomes home to 50 children between the ages of 3 and 15 years old.

The school has several classrooms and, with a full student body, is nearly at its capacity of 350 students.

ANA Col. Zmaray, planning commander for the 205th "Hero" Corps, began watching the orphanage after discovering it on his way to work from Kandahar City to Shir Zai Camp. He intends to improve the living conditions of the orphanage with the sole purpose of enhancing the quality of life for the children.

"My mission is to show the public the feelings of the soldiers in the ANA," said Zmaray. "This will show our relationship



Photo by Army Sgt. Mayra Kennedy

Afghan girls gather next to Capt. Devon Adkinson, 4th Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, during a humanitarian aid event. School supplies, clothing and food were donated to the Shaheed A. Ahad Karzai Orphanage on May 29. Adkinson, National Command Element Commander out of Fort Polk, La., assisted by bringing donations sent by family members and friends from the U.S.

with civilians and especially how the ANA and Coalition Forces are working together."

Shaha Padin, 15-year-old boy, was welcomed to the orphanage three months ago. He expressed his gratitude in receiving donations from the soldiers.

"I'm very happy to get help from the ANA and Coalition forces," said Padin, whose parents' whereabouts are unknown. "These gifts will really help me in school and that makes me happy."

Padin seeks to advance in his academic studies and, as a 4th grade student, he plans to take a test for the advance study program. If successful, he will be moved ahead to the 5th grade.

A team of 12 teachers provide curriculum of study for Padin and the rest of the children. Norr, a 24-year-old science and language teacher, sees his role as much more than just a teacher, but as a father figure to the children as well.

"We are in a position where we will take anything that we can to help them," said Norr. "Our kids can't buy their own supplies."

Army Capt. Devon Adkinson, National Command Element, Headquarter and

Headquarter Company commander from 4th Brigade, 10th Mountain Division out of Fort Polk, La., was part of the team supporting the ANA at the orphanage donation.

Adkinson's wife, Courtney, and friends from Florida and all over the U.S. contributed to the orphanage by sending supplies, toys and clothing for children.

"This is a good mission because it's a humanitarian aid event," said Adkinson, a former English and American government teacher from Florida. "I'm either going to be an educator or a Soldier. You teach as a Soldier."

The orphanage itself needs many improvements and the ANA and Coalition forces are currently working on ways to assist the orphanage.

Principal Hekmatullah, who oversees the orphanage and school, was present when the ANA and Coalition forces delivered supplies, toys and shoes to the children.

"On behalf of the Afghan people, I thank the ANA for coming here with the Coalition forces and bringing this donation," said Hekmatullah, after receiving a new Afghan flag from the ANA, symbolizing a brighter future for the orphanage.



Afghan boys at the Shaheed A. Ahad Karzai received school supplies, clothing and food during a humanitarian event where donations were made by Afghan National Army and Coalition forces May 29.

Logistics Task Force 94 conducts Coalition driver's training

**By Army Capt.
Crystal DeFrancisco**
Logistics Task Force 94

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Logistics Task Force 94 is continuing partnership training here to ensure the Afghan National Army is trained to be successful in combat service support distribution operations on the battlefield.

In May, LTF 94 initiated a Coalition driver's instruction course that focused on training and maintenance of the 7-ton international cargo truck, a 44 passenger bus, and a Ford Ranger; all common vehicles used by the ANA to support operations.

Instructors for the training were Army Master Sgt. Matthew McGregor, Army Staff Sgt. Gregory Wilkey, Army Sgt. Timothy Iverson, and Army Sgt. Nathan Faiola, all assigned to the LTF 94 maintenance platoon.

The first three-day course was held at Camp Sherzai, an ANA facility located near Kandahar Airfield. The program included classroom instruction and

hands-on driver and maintenance training.

The instructors were faced with the challenge of the language barrier and communicating the training materials through a translator to ensure the soldiers understood the basic fundamentals of the vehicle's operation and maintenance. With the assistance of an interpreter, instructors were able to overcome not only the language barrier, but also cultural and experience differences.

The LTF 94 instructors were given the opportunity to participate in the cultural tradition of drinking Afghan tea with the ANA soldiers during training; broadening their awareness of the Afghan culture.

Ten students successfully graduated the first course, with an estimated 150 scheduled to complete the program. Upon graduation, the students received a certificate of training and the honor graduate received special recognition.

According to their instructors, the training was well received by the ANA soldiers.



Photo by Army Capt. Crystal DeFrancisco

Army Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Cox, Logistics Task Force 94 training coordinator, presents the honor graduate with his certificate of training at Camp Sherzai recently. Logistics Task Force 94 is continuing partnership training here to ensure the Afghan National Army is trained to be successful in combat service support distribution operations on the battlefield.

"Our Soldiers got to see first hand the hurdles the ANA have had to overcome; ensuring these soldiers are trained and proficient serves the long term security of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan," said Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Cox, training coordinator. "These are some great soldiers

and I think they appreciated the training."

The instructors were able to learn something as well.

"Not only was it a great teaching experience," said McGregor, "it was also an opportunity to learn about the ANA soldiers and their culture."



PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

A group of Afghan boys show off the toys they received during a civic assistance mission in the village of Penni. The 27th Engineer Battalion conducted the recent mission there, helping hundreds of local Afghans.

Photo by Army 2nd Lt. Jennifer Hwang
27th Engineer Battalion

If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to freedomwatch@baf.af.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.

14th CSH dedicated to Coalition training

By Army Pfc.

Anna K. Perry

19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Soldiers from the 14th Combat Support Hospital (Task Force Med) helped a small group of their New Zealand comrades hone their emergency response skills June 8 to 9 on Camp Lacy here.

"The purpose of this class is to review the New Zealander's buddy aid skills, as well as give them some exposure to things indigenous to Afghanistan, like snakes and spiders," said Army Sgt. George McGraw, 14th CSH.

They are out on missions for days or weeks at a time and the material covered will give them the knowledge to sustain a critically injured person for two to four hours until a helicopter can arrive, McGraw said.

The 14th CSH instructors went over everything from medical evacuation and improvised litters to controlling bleeding and managing shock.

"It's more of a lecture course with the students demonstrating what they've learned," said McGraw. "The class is a refresher in what they were taught by their army, plus new techniques and procedures we're using."

McGraw believes it's important for his Coalition partners to receive the most up-to-date training available saying knowledge is power and everyone will benefit from working together.

"As we tailor our resources to the environment, we can never be Army centric. We must include our sister services and Coalition partners to accomplish the mission," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Cunningham, 14th CSH chief ward master.

"We must make sure we are all highly trained so overall survivability on the battlefield increases," added Cunningham.

The 14th CSH members provide continual training to insure battlefield survivability.

"Every day we're finding a new way to improve the way we do things. For example, the tourniquet used to be the last resort, now it's the first resort for severe



Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

New Zealand Army Lt. Col. Mark Blythen treats his "wounded" battle buddy, New Zealand Army Capt. Anthony McQuillan, during a first aid refresher course held June 8 to 9 at Camp Lacy. Blythen and McQuillan are both assigned to the New Zealand National Support Element.

bleeding of an extremity," said McGraw.

The course with the New Zealanders is a first for the 14th CSH. The team is look-

ing forward to conducting more training with the Coalition forces in the near future, he added.

Artillery sergeant takes aim at education

By Army Staff Sgt.

Nicholas Lutton

345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan -- On a day full of wind and dust here, education might be the farthest thing from most Soldiers' minds. However, for Sgt. 1st Class Javier A. Molina, a Salerno Education Center teacher, it is at the forefront of most of his work today.

"The Soldiers are very excited about classes being held on the gun-line," said Molina, gunnery sergeant for the 4th Battalion – 25th Field Artillery Regiment. "In field artillery, if we get an 'incoming' they can move quickly to their fighting positions. Because Soldiers have to be close to the guns, I mainly focus on my guys."

Molina, a native of Columbia, came to the United States in the early 90s. He couldn't speak English, but he knew people in New York City who had gone years without learning English.

"I told myself, I did not want to be like that," he said. "I was a teacher in Columbia and I already had a bachelor's degree in economics from my country. When I came to the U.S., I joined the U.S. Army to learn English."

While in the Army, Molina has earned another bachelor's degree in economics from Excelsior College in Albany, N.Y.

He's currently working on his master's degree in Organizational Development at Incarnate Word University in San Antonio, Texas.

"I tell my guys, one day they are going to leave the Army," said Molina. "They will leave by retirement, chapter, or choice. I've seen the key to success is in education. I tell them a thief can break into your house and steal everything you own, except your education."

More than 120 Soldiers have taken at least one of his nine classes and many are just starting their college education.

Molina said he originally went to the education center to start work on his master's degree. When he saw a sign for "teachers needed" he decided to apply.

He's eligible to teach 34 different classes including military science and management classes.

"I think it's great what he's (Molina) done," said Staff Sgt. Asa J. Barry, 4-25th Field Artillery. "We work 12 hours on and 12 hours off so it's very hard for us to get up to the education center. The way he teaches and the examples he uses really help us. It also really helps our career."

Barry, from Tulsa, Oklahoma, has completed nine credit hours since he has been in Afghanistan. His goal is to get his bachelor's degree in business management.

"I'm a golfer," said Barry. "I am probably going to stay in the Army; but when I do get out I would like to become a club pro-



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Nicholas Lutton

Army Sgt. 1st Class Javier A. Molina, 4th Battalion - 25th Field Artillery Regiment gunnery sergeant, lectures to soldiers taking college classes here June 3.

fessional and a college degree will help me work on the business side of golf."

Barry said although Molina gets paid to teach classes, he takes his personal time to tutor Soldiers.

"We (the soldiers) helped build the tent and desks where we have our classes," said Barry. "Sergeant Molina took a lot of his personal time to help us build this up."

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asked that they exceed the standards set by their leaders.

"Become a military expert, a professional, and most importantly, learn to be a man of great character. Do that, and I am confident you will be a young leader that Afghanistan can be proud of," said Eikenberry.

The general said the cadet's path includes great responsibility.

"You must lead the way and set the standard for all the rest," said Eikenberry. "The future of your Army and country depends on you and it starts right here, right now."



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Matt Summers

Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan commander, looks over the cadets of the National Military Academy of Afghanistan after talking with them June 12.

Basketball stars hoop it up in Afghanistan

**By Army Spc.
James Tamez**
19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- For some people, basketball is a game they enjoy playing with family and friends. For others, it is a way of life and a way to touch the lives of loyal fans.

Two retired National Basketball Association players and one retired Women's National Basketball Association player visited Coalition troops and played basketball against them while in Afghanistan.

"I just want to say thank you for having me here," said Darryl Dawkins, retired NBA player. "It has been an honor to spend time with the troops."

He said he also hopes the people back home continue to support American forces because of the work being done for the people of Afghanistan.

Dawkins said people at home sometimes take things for granted, like having running water, television and electricity. A lot is being done for the people here, leaving him with a new respect for the Soldiers.



Rushia Brown, far left, watches as Army Staff Sgt. Neikesha Clark and Marine Gunnery Sgt. Carlotta Moore rush for the basketballs while participating in a basketball drill at Bagram Airfield on June 9.

Dawkins said he enjoyed the 12-day tour around Afghanistan because he has been able to provide entertainment and fun for Coalition personnel across the country.

"We're very appreciative of all you are doing here," said Rushia Brown, a retired WNBA player.

Brown said she has a sister who is serving in Iraq, which influenced her decision to make the trip to meet with Soldiers. She said she arrived without expectations, but after seeing the response of Coalition members, the trip has been gratifying.

"It has been great having fun with the troops," she said.

Former NBA player Dale Ellis was also excited and surprised from the response he received during his visit here.

"The welcome we've received has been tremendous," said Ellis. "I was overwhelmed. I am thrilled to be a part of this."

Ellis said he grew up in a military family, so he feels a special attachment to the personnel who are currently serving. He said he has been retired for five years now, and he wants to

give back to his fans in the best way he knows how; sharing his love of the game with the fans.

"Things like this let the Soldiers know people back home are thinking about

us," said Army 1st Sgt. Elliot Hines, 277th Aviation Support Battalion. "They get the opportunity to play basketball with NBA players and get face time with them. The Soldiers are coming out and enjoying the event."

Ellis said this is why he wanted to come to Afghanistan and let service members know the people back home feel.

"We appreciate what you are doing over here," Ellis said. "So we want to put a smile on your face and give you a taste of home."



Photos by Army Spc. James Tamez

Army Sgt. Marquis Brown attempts a lay-up over an outstretched Darryl Dawkins as Rushia Brown watches. Marquis Brown is a part of the 330th Movement Control Battalion.

It's in the mail!

Postal services boost morale, provide lifeline to home

By Army Pfc.

Anna K. Perry

19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Mail has always been an important part of military life. Troops are reminded of home every time they receive a letter or package during mail call.

Soldiers assigned to the 23rd Adjutant General Postal Company here work day and night to make sure a constant flow of mail connects those serving in Afghanistan to those who love them.

“Most people think working at the post office is an easy gig,” said Army Staff Sgt. Bruce Jordan, noncommissioned officer in charge of postal operations.

“It’s not though ... on an average day we process between 25 and 30 thousand pounds of incoming and outgoing commercial mail,” Jordan added.

The incoming mail process consists of getting packages and letters to the correct units throughout Bagram and palletizing mail destined for the

forward operating bases throughout Afghanistan.

“We also take the mail from the folks here on Bagram and process it to go anywhere in the world, whether that be to the United States, another APO or even another country,” Jordan said.

Jordan’s troops in the operations section are not the only ones who work hard to insure troops can receive and send mail quickly and efficiently.

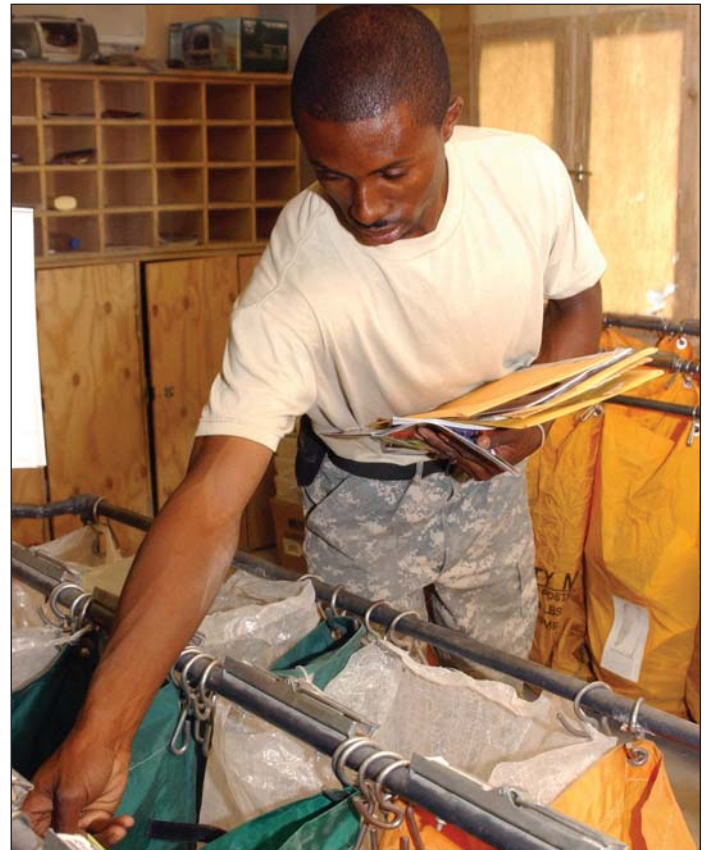
“We have multiple divisions here at the post office ... we’ve also got the air movement team, the redirect section, the registered mail section and the finance section,” said Army Staff Sgt. Marcus Akabi-Davis, custodian of postal effect.

The sections have processed more than 3.5 million pounds of mail since arriving in country three months ago.

The goal of the post office, in every section, is to service troops and keep them happy, Akabi-Davis said.

Akabi-Davis and Jordan agree morale of the service members is the number one priority.

“To me, the best gift is seeing



Photos by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

Army Staff Sgt. Tyrone Crocker “pitches flats” in the operations section of the Bagram post office. Crocker is assigned to the 23rd Adjutant General Postal Company.

the smiles and excitement when Soldiers get mail, even if it’s just an envelope,” Akabi-Davis said.

“We bring them mail, a slice of home. That slice of home reminds troops of the freedom they represent,” Jordan added.

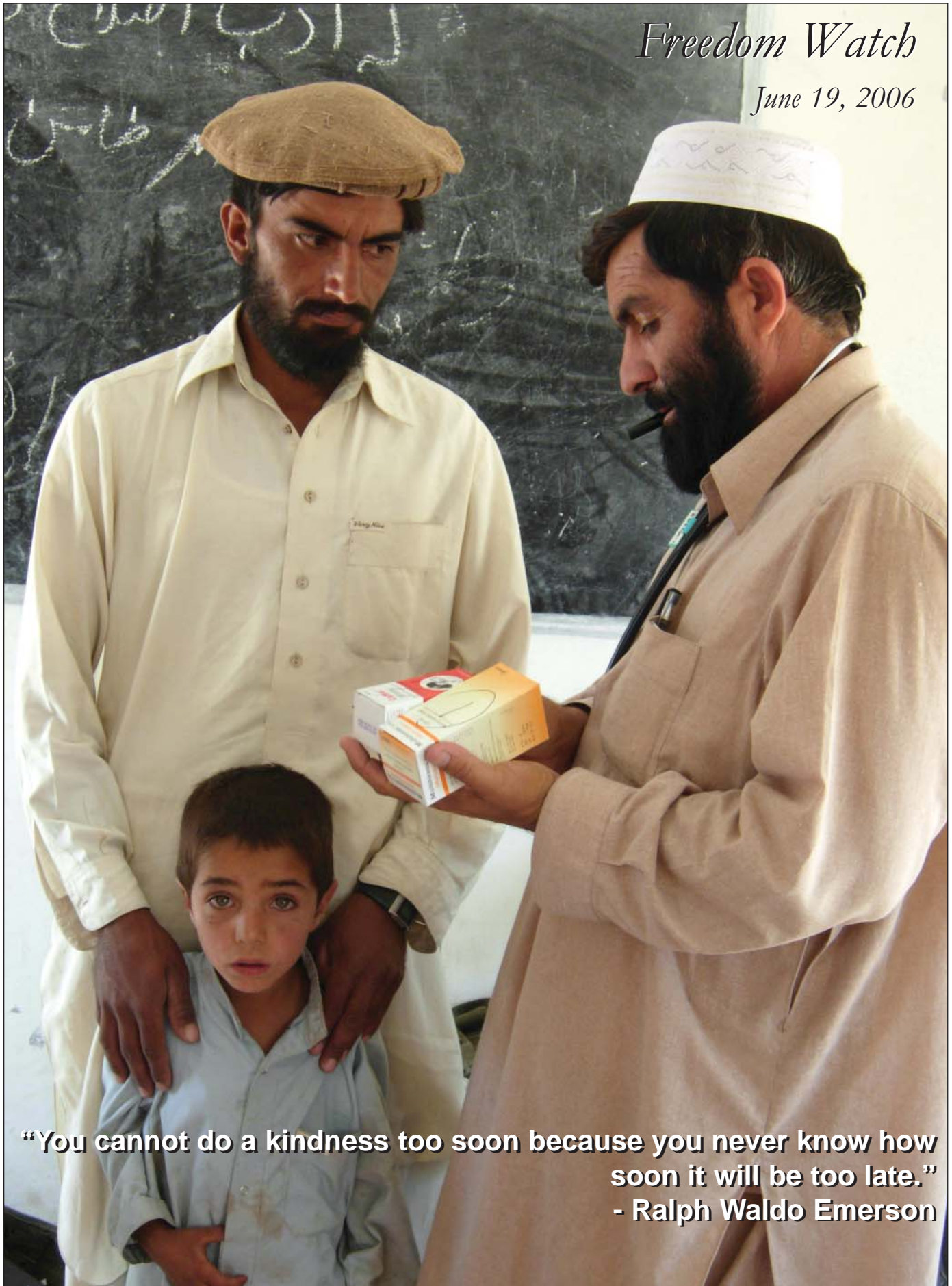
Army Pfc. Adrian Gray checks mail on the conveyor belt at the Bagram post office. Gray is assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment “Catamounts.”



Army Sgt. Lloyd Price and Army Sgt. John Olaleye unload incoming mail at the Bagram post office. Olaleye and Price are assigned to the 23rd Adjutant General Postal Company.

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**"You cannot do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson**